

Dwight's Journal of Music,

A Paper of Art and Literature.

WHOLE No. 309.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 1858.

VOL. XII. No. 23.

Dwight's Journal of Music, PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

TERMS: By Mail, \$2 per annum, in advance.
When left by Carrier, \$2.50
SINGLE COPIES, SIX CENTS.

J. S. DWIGHT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.
EDWARD L. BALCH, PRINTER.
OFFICE, No. 21 School Street, Boston.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED

At the OFFICE OF PUBLICATION, 21 School St. Boston.
By RUSSELL & RICHARDSON, 291 Wash'n St.
" CLAPP & CORY, Providence, R. I.
" C. BREUSING, 701 Broadway, New York.
" SCHARFENBERG & LUIS, 769 Broadway, "
" GEORGE DUTTON, Jr., Rochester, N. Y.
" G. ANDRE & CO., 1104 Chestnut St. Philadelphia.
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For Dwight's Journal of Music.

From the Life of an Obscure Musician.*

II.

It has been ascertained, incredible as it may seem, that the goddess of music presided at my birth, and, as is the female fashion on such occasions, pressed a kiss upon my baby lips; but with such intense, vehement affection that she wounded me, and drops of blood were seen to fall to the floor. Whereat those standing by were frightened, and the more resolute severely reproached the goddess for being so careless, so that she took to her wings and disappeared, leaving the ceremonies unfinished. To this mishap I ascribe the innumerable obstacles with which I have continually had to contend, in the endeavor to raise myself to a prominent position in the tone-art, so that I at last succumbed, and resolved to remain in obscurity rather than to continue such Sisyphean labor any longer. The following will show how humbly and unfavorably my career commenced.

* Those of my readers, who are acquainted with the musical institutions of Germany, will no doubt have recognized the boarding music-school, which forms so prominent a feature in our "Obscure Musician's" life, as one of those musical workshops where music is carried on like any craft or trade, the principal or master of the establishment being called *Stadtmusicus*, *Stadtfeifer*, or in some of the larger cities, *Stadt-musikdirector*. These institutions date back to the Middle Age, and in their original functions had as little to do with true Art as the workshop of a sign-painter has to do with the Art of Raphael or Rubens. That they are not all in so bad a condition, especially in the larger cities, as the one mentioned here, is partly proved by the many very able musicians, now scattered over all the world, who passed through such a school; so that, for the sake of the art, one does not know whether to regret or to rejoice that in more recent times they are beginning to sink into oblivion.

But, my brethren in the art and readers in general, you need not fear that I shall overdo my story with sighs and lamentations; for I am long since resigned to my fate, and regard my past life as perfectly objective, as if it did not concern me at all. This enables me to relate the following episode from my life in a cheerful spirit; nay, I am even vain enough to hope to occasionally illumine your faces, dear perusers, with a bit of a smile. Now listen! or, as Madame El Oquenza would say, *Faites attention!*

Two of my brothers, older than myself, were unsuccessful in the attempt to prevail on my mother to let them, like my deceased father, choose music for a profession. They were now placed in a business which was supposed to yield more substantial reward than the divine art. However, fears were entertained for the third boy, who, being very headstrong, seemed determined, cost what it might, to become a musician and nothing else. This was myself. I was now advanced to that age where it is necessary to prepare for the choice of a vocation, and accordingly I was urged by our relatives and friends—my mother had long since got tired of reasoning with me about the matter—to dismiss music from my mind and say what other profession I liked best. They reminded me of the unhappy career of my father as a musician, and of the small chance the fine arts afforded one of becoming a steady citizen and father of a family. They cited our neighbor Mr. Strap as a model of a citizen, as he owned a whole house, inclusive of a smart wife and a dozen children. Or, if I did not like to become a shoemaker, there was Mr. Twist the tailor on the corner below, who was so well off that he had lately sent one of his sons to the university to study law. But the brilliant condition neither of shoemaker nor tailor was powerful enough to tempt me into their ranks, and there remained no other means for my friends but to appeal to my conscience, which they knew was very sensitive. To be sure, when I thought of my mother, and that I caused her so much grief by obstinately refusing to give up the musician, I felt very badly; and my only hope was that by continual entreaties I might yet gain her consent.

There lived at that time in the same house with us a widow lady of Spanish descent, by the name of Madame El Oquenza. She had several grown up daughters, one of whom was betrothed to a musician, a distinguished performer on the flute and composer of light music. When the time appointed for the nuptials drew near, he, with the consent of his betrothed, left for his native city, to arrange matters with his parents, but forgot to come back, and was never heard from.

Madame El Oquenza, nevertheless, had still a great fancy for music, musicians, and anything relating thereto. She was thoroughly initiated into the professional life, and loved nothing better than to talk of it whenever a neighbor could be induced to lend his ear an hour or more. She came several times during the day into our room to see what was going on in our family, and to acquaint us with the news of the day, of which she was better informed than the newspapers. After the news were duly served up, she would give us one or two of her "twice-told tales" about Paganini, Catalani, or some such musical celebrity, which she had got from the above-named flute-player and composer of light music, who probably was also the composer of these stories. It was to her that I applied in my distress, and begged her to exert her influence on my mother in my favor. She had always petted me, and it was, therefore, natural that she tranquilized and comforted me, saying she would manage the matter to my entire satisfaction, I might depend upon it. The next day, when I came home from school, I found her in our room, in the midst of an inspired discourse addressed to my mother and sister, both of whom, as usual, were sewing. She showed them with great clearness how the musical profession was superior to all others, and what riches and honors might be derived from it with only a little labor and frugality. After one year's instruction, said she, I should certainly be able to give lessons myself; and there were many among her acquaintances who had frequently spoken of buying a piano-forte and having their children learn, if they only knew a reliable teacher; these as well as others I was sure to receive for my pupils through her influence, and thus I should earn money enough not only to defray my own expenses, but even to aid those dear to me. At this part of her speech I suddenly interposed, by throwing my arms around my mother's neck, crying: "Yes, mother, surely I will aid you, so that you need not sew another stitch; we will fling all the old needles and twist out of the window, with which you plague yourself from morning till night. And then, how I shall rejoice to accompany, one day, both yourself and Lizzie in a splendid carriage to my own concert, when I shall conduct you up to a front seat, close by the orchestra, expressly prepared and decorated for you with gold and crimson! And how you will feel flattered, seeing me so applauded and honored! O what a beautiful time we shall have!"

To be short, we achieved a complete victory; and in consequence it was resolved to apply at the boarding music-school in our town to learn whether I could find admittance there, this being

thought the cheapest and most convenient way to accomplish our object. Madame El Quenza kindly offered to go in person to the principal and make a contract as advantageous as might be expected from her knowledge and eloquence; which offer, we of course, accepted gratefully. She returned from the mission with a triumphant air to tell us it was all right. At first the principal had made objections, as, according to his statement the number of pupils was complete, and he had no room for any more; but on Madame El Quenza telling him that I was the smartest boy she ever saw, and that when I was a small child she had observed me frequently to take a sheet of paper, roll it up and play on it as on a clarinet, which looked so funny that she could not help laughing, he finally consented to take me. He wanted me to call on him as soon as possible, that he might find out for what instruments I was best fitted. So I went immediately.

It was with a kind of awe that I approached the house, out of every window of which, from the basement to the roof, were heard the sounds of some instrument practiced by the pupils. High from the topmost story came the shrill tones of clarinets, and flutes, and violins, while from the cellar rose the ponderous sounds of the double-bass and trombone basso. The middle stories resounded with a mixture of tenors, violoncellos, bassoons, horns, and so forth, which strongly resembled a kind of music technically called "cat-music," i. e. music made by the cats at their nocturnal meetings. To me, however, the building as well as the music that emanated from it had a magic charm, because I was so full of anticipation of the time before me, when I myself should occupy a window in the gable and emit strains from my violin or flute into the wide world. I had reflected long before I found myself in the principal's room. He had several gentlemen with him, all of whom were smoking long pipes, so that the room was completely filled with a blue smoke. He asked me first whether it was really my earnest wish to become a musician; which question I of course answered in the affirmative, in the most glowing terms I could command. He then said with emphasis: "If you believe our institution a good place in which to idle away the time, you are greatly mistaken. You will have to practice five or six hours daily, and besides, you are bound to copy music and do some household work, as I may order." This theme was more fully developed by saying that the three youngest pupils had to attend on his person; each having a special office entrusted to him. One was to superintend the pipes: keeping them clean, polished and in good smoking order. Another had the care of the master's wardrobe, to brush the clothes and black the boots every morning, also to sew up small holes and replace a button gone. The third was to attend the horse, the principal taking great delight in equestrian sports. Being myself extremely fond of horseback riding at that time, I asked him if he would be so kind as to appoint me for the steed; but he answered I was too small, he should rather give me the pipes.

This unmusical topic he suddenly dropped, asking me what instrument I liked best.

"I love the violin and flute the best," was my reply.

"Well," he resumed, "you may choose them

both, and perhaps you will have to learn others too, according as the arrangement of our orchestra shall require. But one of these instruments you must consider your principal one, and to perfect yourself on that must be your chief care."

One of the gentlemen present, noticing my small stature and childlike appearance, cried out laughingly: "Give him the doublebass, he is just the man for it; ha, ha, ha!" and then asked me to pass him the spittoon.

The conversation ended with my being informed that I should remain still a year with my mother till I was above fourteen. In the meantime I should receive instruction from one of the most advanced pupils, so that, when I entered the institution as a regular member, I might be able to take part at once in the orchestral performances. The principal condescended to teach me the notes himself. For this purpose he gave me a large written book, which commenced with the system of notation and ended with a goodly number of waltzes, Ecossaises, etc., and some old tunes, among which, that favorite one: "Sweet moon, thou walkest so silently," was uppermost. He told me to come every Sunday morning, before church, to his house, when he would spend fifteen minutes with me in the explanation of those characters and signs which till then seemed hieroglyphics to me. I wondered how those crotchets and quavers, those sharps and flats, encircled by innumerable dots, strokes, squares and angles, looking like a flock of wild geese in the clouds on a picture, could ever represent such sweet, harmonious music as the player drew out from them, and I was delighted that the time had now come when this all should be as clear to me as sunlight.

When, therefore, Sunday came, I put on my best jacket, combed my hair finely, and made everything as nice as if I were going to a birth-day party; then I took that ominous big book under my arm and went to receive the first lesson in music. The first lesson in music! What hopes, what ex—, but I shall not stop to indulge in reflections, tempting as the occasion may be.

As I walked over the streets in the stillness of that Sunday morning, it seemed to me as if the whole town had become changed since yesterday; as if it had washed and dressed itself as nicely as myself. Presently the bells of one church began to toll, then of another, and so on, till all the streets resounded with their silvery music. Between the houses I got a peep at the blue sky, and I wished that I had wings to fly up for a moment to bathe my head a little in those sunbeams which played so quietly on the roofs of the houses. I continued my way absorbed in this sweet reverie, when I beheld my playmate and bosom friend, Tom Cryer, unwashed and uncombed, coming up the street in great haste, and with much noise, to meet me. But as soon as he approached I cast an indignant look at him, sharp enough to pierce his very soul, and then walked on with a proud and solemn step. He stopped and followed me with his eyes for a distance, and finally I heard him laugh outright, which, in the exalted state of mind I was in, appeared very disturbing and entirely out of place. I felt greatly inclined to throw my book down, run after him, and rub his ears a little; but solemn as the occasion was, I deemed it more proper to scorn his laughter; and, to vex him, walked still a little more erect.

A few Sundays sufficed to become thoroughly acquainted with the notes, signs of rest, and so forth. I was now consigned to the care of one of the pupils, who was to give me instruction on the violin, two lessons a week, on days and at hours always to be appointed by him, as his school and household duties might permit. But Carl Sting was by no means a faithful teacher to me. He knew perfectly well that he could do as he pleased, since the principal, being what the French call a *bon vivant*, was the whole long day after his pleasures, and never cared for the pupils, unless he wanted them for his business. So, when I came in the afternoon, at the appointed hour, to take my lesson, I generally found my worthy instructor stretched at full length on the bed, and snoring like a bassoon. Being afraid to encounter his anger by rousing him, I used to ask one of the other boys, a special friend of mine, to come in with the trumpet, and blow Carl Sting up. My friend was never slow to comply with my request, and putting his trumpet close to the sleeper's ear, would play a flourish with such force as made one think the instrument must burst like an overloaded gun. This always had the effect that Carl jumped instantaneously on his feet, but in such a rage that he would have broken both the player and his trumpet to pieces, had the other not been stronger than himself. Thus disturbed in his favorite recreation, he continued to be morose and angry during the lesson, and it may be supposed that he did not handle me very gently.

In spite of this irregular, bad instruction I made rapid progress, so that, when my year of probation was finished, and I entered the institution as a regular pupil, I was considered one of the best players in the house. I became, however, soon aware that this was no place for me; and had it not been for the infinite love I bore to music, I would have run away at the earliest convenience. Not only that little or no instruction was given, but there were not even places enough where we could practice. Especially during the winter season, when it was too cold in the entries, garrets, cellars, and similar holes, of which we availed ourselves in mild weather, we were all crowded into one room, the only one we had. We then divided the day equally amongst us, so that each received an hour, or less, for practice. Rather a scanty allowance for those who, like myself, were burning with the desire for progress! Fortunately, or unfortunately, there were some for whom this short time, even, was too much, and I availed myself of their indolence, and copied music for them, or blacked their boots, for which they cheerfully relinquished their time to me, so that on many a day I obtained three to four hours in this way.

I have to remark that in our school only orchestral instruments were learned; however, we were permitted the use of the principal's piano-forte for practice early in the morning, before any one of his family rose, if we had money to take instruction elsewhere, or were clever enough to teach ourselves. There was no one who made use of this privilege, except myself. Before five o'clock in the morning, when my fellow pupils still dreamed of hearty dinners—a phantom which day and night floated before their mind—I played, myself, at the piano-forte, with scales and exercises; and I am glad to this day that I did.

Before I quit the music school altogether, in

which I remained five years, exclusive of the year of probation, I will relate an incident illustrative of that envy and jealousy which is said to be inseparable from the musical profession, be the sphere ever so humble wherein the artists move.

Some years after I entered the institution as a regular member, I noticed that Carl Sting, who as stated above, gave me the first lessons on the violin, cherished ill feelings towards me. The cause could easily be guessed. Ambitious as he was, it troubled him that one several years his junior had so soon overtaken him, not only on the violin, but on other instruments, and in the theory of music. Especially did he envy me my talent for composition, in which he himself was entirely wanting. The amateur club in our town had at several times publicly performed little pieces of mine, so that I felt encouraged to try my hand on higher forms. An overture for small orchestra was next finished. The parts were copied from the score, and safely deposited in my port-folio, when the long wished-for rehearsal, where it should be tried, was at last to take place. I took my port-folio under my arm and hastily started, as was already a little behind time. On the haste I made a misstep and fell, which opened the port-folio so that the parts of my overture were scattered all over the floor. I immediately collected them and glancing with my eyes over the first violin-part found that it was full of ink-spots made in the attempt to scratch out the right, genuine notes, and to substitute counterfeit ones. My consternation was indescribable, when on further examination I found all the parts thus deformed, which, had the piece been played in this state, would have sounded horribly. I at once knew the author of this mischief, and my anger was so great that I could not restrain my tears. However, I resolved to keep the whole occurrence a secret till I had repaired the damage. This could be done, as meanwhile word arrived that the rehearsal was postponed to the next day. So, if I remained up all night I had sufficient time to copy the parts once more.

Several pieces were already tried when I was told to distribute my Overture. Carl Sting, who played first violin with me, stood there full of anticipation of the pleasure he should soon enjoy when the horrible harmonies with which he had disfigured my piece, should make their appearance. However, unable to master my indignation any longer, I addressed the members of the orchestra, before we commenced, in the following manner:

"Gentlemen, you are perhaps not aware that the fiend has come amongst us in the shape of a musician. Look at him—there he stands, fiddle in hand! True to his nature, he delights in heart-and ear-rending harmonies; wherefore he has transformed my inoffensive overture into a piece of music mad enough to excite the stern features of his famous grandpapa himself to a broad grin. But my good genius gave me warning in time. His black design of holding me up to ridicule and mockery has been frustrated, though it has cost me the hard labor of copying all the parts anew. Verily I say there is retribution. One vice begets another. Let him continue his path and he will soon reap the fruits of his iniquity."

Sting endeavored to smile, plainly betraying the anger he felt at the ill success of his mean

trick, which dashed him into the very pit he had dug for me. A scornful laughter from the whole orchestra greeted him instantly, and some members of the club proposed to go in person to the principal and see to it that he was deservedly punished; which offer I, however, declined, knowing the brutality our master was likely to give way to when once incensed. Thus the German proverb was strikingly illustrated in this case, which says: *Wer Andern eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein* (He who digs a pit for others, falls into it himself).

ADOLAR.

A Managerial "Message."

Mr. Ullman's frank and intimate communications to the dear public, since he has managed Operatic matters in New York, are pleasant enough sometimes to stand on record. Here is the last, which appears this week:

Academy of Music—The "Huguenots"—A Few Words to the Public.

I have given you the longest and most brilliant season of grand opera that has ever taken place in America. I have had to struggle against greater obstacles than any other manager. I allude to the late financial revulsion. The direction of the opera has always involved great risks under the most prosperous circumstances; you can, therefore, easily imagine how much I had to work to achieve the gratifying result I have obtained, in spite of a monthly outlay of over \$25,000, occasioned through the production of so many grand and comparatively new operas by a company so numerous and costly.

In bringing out the "Huguenots" in the style which will distinguish the work, I have taxed my resources to the utmost. The new scenery and dresses alone cost over \$6,000, and the general expenses of extra chorus, extra orchestra and extra rehearsals will swell this amount to fully \$10,000. This exceeds, by many thousands of dollars, the largest sum ever expended on any opera given in this country.

From present appearances, and the actual inquiries for seats and boxes, even before the day of the first performance is definitely fixed, there is no doubt that this opera will attract immense audiences for many nights; but however full the houses may be, I cannot make my expenses at present prices, and I cannot but lose by my attempt to bring out a celebrated opera in a style fully equalling that of the first opera house in Europe.

Will you permit this? Assuredly not, or I am greatly mistaken in the proverbial liberality of the New Yorkers.

Every manager has been in the habit of taking one or more benefits during the season. For reasons, which it would be too long to detail, I consider this custom more honored in the breach than in the observance. I intend appealing to the public in another, and what I believe to be a more rational shape.

I request the public to pay, on such nights when the "Huguenots" is given, \$1.50 for the admission ticket, instead of \$1, as on other nights. This is a mere trifle to every individual person, but it will be a substantial assistance to me, which must bring me, in the aggregate, a clear gain of \$5,000.

Do you think I have some claim upon you? Will you pay the price, and will you do so cheerfully? You have done so for Sontag, Alboni, Mario and Grisi, and the old and worn out operas they have appeared in.

The price for a decent place to see the "Huguenots" in Paris is \$3, in London \$5. Those who go to see the "Huguenots" at the Academy will perhaps find a superior performance.

I shall risk the experiment, at all events, on the first night. Should this moderate increase of prices, for this occasion only, prove objectionable, I shall abandon it, and bow to your decision.

To those who know me, I need not assure that every cent thus obtained will be faithfully em-

ployed by me towards making next winter's season still more brilliant than that which will expire in a few weeks. I have been honored by an unanimous vote of the directors and stockholders of the Academy of Music with an extension of my present lease of one year to one of four years, and thus encouraged, I can safely promise you for next winter a succession of brilliant operas, got up in a style fully equalling that which can only be found in an European opera house enjoying a large subvention by government.

B. ULLMAN.

MUSIC IN NEW ORLEANS.—It is so rare a thing to see, in the Northern papers, and in particular the musical press of the North, any recognition of the fact that we have any thing in the way of music, here in New Orleans, worth noticing, that when we do find an allusion of the kind, we deem it sufficiently notable to acknowledge it.

Dwight's Journal of Music, (Boston,) of the 30th ult., says, "while in other cities the opera has but a fitful existence—in New Orleans it seems to have attained quite a permanent foothold. In looking over the musical notices of the *Picayune*, for the last three months, we are struck with the variety, excellence and number of works, which have been performed at the Theatre d'Orleans." The list given by Dwight is quite incomplete. Besides the eight thereon, (and, by the by, the *Les Amours du diable*, we would state is by Grisar, a cotemporary composer,) the following operas have been given, already, this season: Adam's *Chalet* and *Si j'étais roi*; Halévy's *Juive*; Donizetti's *Fille du Regiment* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*; Meyerbeer's *Prophete*, and Auber's *Diamans de la Couronne*; and within a few days we are to have Verdi's *Ernani*; Rossini's *Moise*, and Halévy's *Reine de Chypre*—making in all, seventeen operas, (besides dramatic performances once a week,) and the season not half complete.

Our Boston cotemporary notices the fact, too, that in addition to its opera, New Orleans has a "Classic Music Society," and calls the performances with which it commenced its season's series of concerts an "almost unrivaled programme."

So, now that we are officially and complementarily recognized as having some pretensions in a musical way, we may "go on our way rejoicing." —*Picayune*, Feb. 7.

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

A word in reply to Dr. Zopff's Protest.

In the number of this Journal dated Feb. 13, appeared: "A word in conclusion to the Characteristics of Weber and Mendelssohn," by Dr. Zopff, in which he protests against the tenor of two articles in Nos. 285 and 289, the latter copied from the *London Musical World*. The editor in introducing the Doctor's concluding word has already called his attention to the strange mistake he made by confounding the Boston writer about Weber with the London writer about Mendelssohn. This at least, if not the articles themselves, so widely different in style and expression, would be sufficient testimony, that the undersigned, who is known by some to be the author of the essay on Weber, has no concern whatever with the other article, wherein Dr. Zopff's "Characteristics of Mendelssohn" are attacked. The Dr.'s business is, accordingly, with the *London Musical World*, and I should not have considered myself called upon to take up the pen, but for some observations which he makes with reference to my essay on Weber.

Dr. Zopff says he has sought in vain for a refutation of his judgments in my article;—and later, that it "completed his elucidation on Weber's immortal merits in a very fitting manner." To this I reply, that I had no intention either to refute his judgments, or to complete his elucidation. If I have done the latter, it has been unconsciously, and the Dr. may take it as he likes; but to presume the former to have been my purpose is what I must protest

against. History has long since assigned to Weber his due place. The period to which he belongs is passed; and whatever may be said about him is of little consequence. It is different with Mendelssohn, who may be said to have founded a school of his own, and who still is the object of contention and party strife; so that Heaven knows when he will be placed where he justly belongs and be suffered to rest quietly. But there are many more reasons for which I deemed it superfluous to undertake a refutation of Dr. Zopf's judgments, which reasons, however, it is unnecessary to state here.

Dr. Zopf further protests against an assertion which he has found in my article, namely: "*such investigations are of no use*," and proceeds, at some length, to show the necessity to form and guide, by sound criticism, the taste and artistic consciousness of the public. I do not know whether the Dr. reads English well; if so, he has in this instance, read somewhat carelessly. My language literally was: "*Such investigations may sometimes prove useful, but in the present case I do not believe that much is gained by trying one's magnifying glasses on a composer who, etc.*" No one can be more convinced than myself, that criticism is indispensable; and he who performs this function with due regard to the responsibility he has taken upon himself, is justly entitled to the gratitude both of the artists and the public.

ADOLPH KIELBLOCK.

Musical Correspondence.

FLORENCE, JAN. 18.—Before I proceed to say anything about the Teatro Ferdinando, the grandest opera house in Florence, I must inform you of the lamentable circumstance, which has called down upon me the wrath (but temporary, I trust), of the Cara Padrona, to whom I have alluded in a previous letter. You must know that it is customary for lodgers at the different houses to buy a key, if they wish to be out late in the evening, or pay a trifle extra for the inconvenience they cause in keeping some one up to let them in. As I wished to be out to the opera almost every night, a mis-directed economy induced me to buy a key. Alas! on what slight events depend weighty consequences!

I bought the key and used it with success for three consecutive nights, each time congratulating myself on my far-seeing economy. One night in particular, on returning from the Goldoni, my self-complacent thoughts found vent in words, and I said to myself, (I had nobody else to say it to,) that whatever might be my faults, no one could accuse me of not exhibiting a prudent foresight, that eminently fitted me for the post of Secretary of the Treasury on the resignation of the present incumbent. Indeed I was so satisfied with my own penetration and economical polity, that it was some time before I could get asleep, and at last I was fain to have recourse to a copy of *Dwight's Journal of Music*, containing a long letter signed "Trovator." I carry this with me as a narcotic, and when I find it difficult to throw myself into the arms of the balmy, as Swiveller would say, I peruse this communication. I need not assure you that it never fails to have a mesmerizing effect, and on this occasion, as on others, I was fast asleep before I had read half of the article.

The next morning a curious—a very curious circumstance occurred. I could not find my key. I looked high and low for it, but in vain. I turned over the bed, and looked between mattresses. I searched under the stove. I examined drawers

that I had never before thought of opening in my life. I inspected the interior of the Refractory Piano. I groped wildly about in dark corners; the key was nowhere to be found. So when the Padrona appeared with my breakfast, in the morning, I said to my excellent Ganyমেদে:—

"Cara Padrona, have you seen my night-key?"

The Cara Padrona had not seen my night-key, and added that she hoped I had not lost it.

I scouted the idea. To lose a night-key! That would be a curious notion indeed; and then I added playfully, that I would be in a pretty pickle if I had lost my night-key, though the Lord only knows how wretched and guilty I felt all the time. The Padrona then asked me quietly if I was sure I had not lost it. I replied with alacrity that I could not possibly have lost the key, you know, but that somehow or other it was—I did not know—yes, it was not—I couldn't exactly lay my hand on it just then.

At this the gentle countenance of the Padrona assumed a shade of severity, and she asked me where I had it last. At this question I put my finger on the side of my nose, and pondered, and then moved my finger to my forehead, and pondered again, in the attitude which Washington Irving assumes in the prints we see in book-stores, and then I took my finger again to the side of my nose, and after a third attack of pondering, I said slowly:—

"I think, Cara Padrona—yes, Mia Cara Padrona—I am quite certain, La Mia Cara Padrona—that I had the key late last night when I came home from the opera."

"God Heavens!" exclaimed the Padrona, in a voice that startled me, "I hope you did not leave it in the key-hole on the outside of the door when you came in!"

"Cara, Cara Padrona," I replied, with anguish depicted upon my countenance, "do not agitate yourself. It is hardly probable a person of sense would leave his night-key in the key-hole on the outside of the door. Now is it? I ask you as a Christian and a brother, is it probable?" Then I treated the affair as a facetious sally of the Padrona's, and I laughed and said, Ha! Ha! Ha! He! He! He! Ho! Ho! Ho! and declared that it was really *too* funny—to leave a key in the outer key-hole! Who ever heard of such a thing?

The Cara Padrona had heard of just such a thing. She had a lodger, she said—an *American*, she added, with bitter emphasis—in the fall of 1849—was it 1849, or was it 1850, she was not quite sure, and it might have been '48, but whenever it was, he left his key outside of the door one night, and, sir, he was obliged at his own expense to have an entire new lock put upon the great front door, and provide a new set of keys for all the lodgers, sixteen in number. And after saying this, the Padrona sailed majestically out of the apartment, leaving me petrified with horror.

I will not dilate upon the particulars of that awful day. A general search was made in my apartment by the Padrona, aided by two Italian maid-servants, but the key was not forthcoming. To add to my misery, I suffered from twinges of conscience, for after much reflection in the Washington Irving attitude, I had come to the conclusion that the supposition of the Padrona had been founded on fact, and that I had really left the key

on the outside of the door. Indeed, I as much as confessed it to the Padrona. She was human, and proud of her own shrewdness in having first suspected the facts of the case. She was so pleased at finding her opinions coincided in, that the fierceness of her wrath subsided, and she became melancholy and plaintive, and related an anecdote about a family in a neighboring street, who were recently awakened from their sleep by hearing a voice, and on rising they found four men in masks packing up the goods and chattels of the said family, previously to abducting the said goods and chattels, and appropriating them to their own use. As it was, they made their escape, carrying with them the cover of an iron pot, three coffee-cups, one pewter spoon, and a gridiron. These and other lamentable histories so worked upon my imagination that I assured the Padrona I would immediately follow the example of my American predecessor, and have a new lock and keys procured. The Padrona was very sorry I should be put to the expense, but every moment was of importance, and she knew, she said, no peace of mind until it was done, for under the present state of circumstances a whole army of men in masks could be admitted by the finder of the key, and they would perhaps take off her choicest plants.

Now if the Padrona has a weakness, it is her collection of plants. She has in her little back yard an assortment of the most remarkable objects in flower-pots that you ever beheld. Geraniums, cacti, rose-bushes, lilacs, are there, but all in the most decrepit and forlorn state that it is possible for them to be in. Indeed, the whole yard seems only like an hospital for aged, indigent, and infirm plants. Yet on these arboriferous and floral Calvin Edsons the Padrona bestows the most unremitting care, frequently wrapping them up in cloths, in bits of carpets, in cushions, in old pillows, etc., to preserve them from the winter's cold, which even in Florence is quite severe. I have discovered a mode of appeasing her on those rare occasions when she is wrathful, by making votive offerings of the cushions of my sofa, and sacrificing at the shrine of these dilapidated plants my table-cloths and my superannuated woolen stockings. The Padrona is to be won through her hobby, though at the time of the key catastrophe I was not aware of this fact.

The Padrona offered to send for a locksmith, but my principles of far-seeing economy prevailing, I decided to engage that functionary myself; for I argued inwardly that the Padrona, not having a direct pecuniary interest in the matter, would not take pains to explain to the locksmith that it was necessary for him to do the job at a very reasonable price, or she would engage some one else. So I called on the locksmith myself, but I not being an adept at the Italian tongue, that personage could not exactly grasp my meaning. But he assured me that he would do the work so reasonably that I should want to pay him double, and we separated with only this indefinite arrangement.

I will not dwell upon the sequel of this melancholy history. Suffice it to say that the work was done, the new keys, eight in number, (I had expected there would be sixteen,) provided, and then the locksmith brought me a bill that was beyond all reason. I remonstrated and appealed to the Padrona, but as she had not engaged the

locksmith she was powerless, and I was obliged to pay what I knew to be double the usual charge. The Padrona also cast a barbed arrow into my bosom by assuring me that, had I allowed her to make the arrangements, I should have saved half my money.

But on returning to my room in no enviable frame of mind, I felt a gloomy thirst for vengeance, and, having with my usual close observation of men and manners, noticed that the heroes in operas, when actuated by a similar motive, cry at the top of the staff—"Ah! mia vendetta!" I repeated this phrase several times, and in different keys, with a gratifying effect. I also seated myself at the Refractory Piano, and performed an extempore bravura aria on the word *vendetta*. My modesty only allows me to say that this production was startling; but the effect was somewhat marred by my singing in A flat, to an accompaniment in G major. Yet this was not enough. So I seized an opera libretto, and glanced over its pages for a suitable vehicle by which to express the ire that raged within. Now it is a remarkable fact that, take any libretto of any modern Italian opera, and you will find on every page a string of ejaculations, expressive of hate, rage, scorn, vengeance, ire, and similar pleasant emotions. I had taken up *Attila*, and almost the first thing my eyes fell upon was the phrase of the King—"Oh! mia rabbia! Oh! mio scorno!" It was the very thing I wanted. If the locksmith had a human heart he would feel my sting. So I rushed to the window and called to the Padrona, who was in the yard below, engaged in wrapping a bolster around the stem of an invalid geranium.

"Padrona!" I cried, "will you have the goodness to tell the Signor Locksmith that the only sentiments I entertain towards him are those of *rabbia* and *scorno*!"

The Padrona promised to convey my message, and my wrath having escaped through this safety-valve, I gradually subsided into that mild and amiable nature that you know under the signature of

TROVATORE.

P. S. *NOTA BENE*. It was my intention in the foregoing letter to describe the chief opera house of Florence. If I have allowed the recital of my private woes to interfere with public weal, and sacrificed the Teatro Ferdinando to the Story of a Night-Key, I trust the afflicting circumstances of my position will atone for the course I have taken.

BROOKLYN, N. Y. FEB. 23.—While so much is being said and written on the subject of Church Music, so many admirable theories advanced, so much grumbling among church committees and church choirs, it is really cheering to be able to point to one living, active, tangible example of what all will agree to be genuine church music. It is the aim of all those who rightly understand the matter, to make the singing in our places of worship on the Sabbath, as much a part of the worship as the prayer or sermon. I know of no place where this has been so satisfactorily accomplished as in the Society of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Plymouth Church.

If any one doubts the efficiency or the practicability of Congregational singing, let them attend Mr. Beecher's church one day, and their doubts will vanish. I have repeatedly heard persons not particularly susceptible to musical im-

pressions, express themselves greatly pleased, and in some cases they would be deeply moved while listening to the singing in Plymouth Church. It is emphatically *Congregational singing*. You can hear voices from every part of the house. Some of the tunes selected are much more generally known than others, and consequently more will be found to sing these, than others less known, but Mr. Beecher makes his selections with reference to all his congregation singing, so that no tunes are selected which the majority cannot sing.

The regular choir consists of about twenty members, led by Professor Raymond of the Polytechnic Institute. Their voices lead off in good time, and never allow the time to drag, though the congregation have now become so used to the tunes and the manner of singing, that the services of the choir might almost be dispensed with. The book used is of course the Plymouth Collection of Hymns and Tunes, which I suppose may be considered the best book of the kind yet published, but it is far from being all that such a book ought to be. Dr. Mason is now engaged in preparing a Congregational Hymn and Tune Book, which will be published next Fall or latter part of the Summer, and no doubt it will be just what is wanted. Certainly no man in this country is more competent both from experience and the ample resources at his command, than Dr. Mason, to produce such a book. But those who think that all will be done that need be done when they get a book containing the hymns and tunes for the congregation to use, or a choir to lead, and that then of course they will have congregational singing, will probably find that but a small part of the labor is done. This, of course, applies more specially to those churches where quartet choirs have prevailed. I do not believe it possible to introduce congregational singing into but a small proportion of our churches, but let us do all we can to accomplish a result so much to be desired, however few the number may be.

In New York the Academy of Music is open again, and the season has commenced auspiciously. Among the novelties we are to have W. H. Fry's *Leonora*, which is looked for with much interest, as it is so long since it has been given in this country, that it is quite new to the present public.

BELLINI.

MANCHESTER, N. H. FEB. 25.—We have not been favored this winter with a visit from any of the stars from the musical firmament, but we have had some good concerts from our home talent. The Cornet Band has given three public concerts, which were very satisfactory and well attended. Mr. E. T. Baldwin has also given four Chamber Concerts, the music being mostly classical. These soirées of Mr. Baldwin's have been a source of more gratification to me, musically, than I supposed I could enjoy this side of Boston. The programme for last Tuesday evening was a rich one, and, for the most part, well performed. The entertainment opened brilliantly with an overture from Auber, which was followed by selections, vocal and instrumental, from Beethoven, Mozart, Donizetti, Balfe, Bishop, and a very few pieces of a lighter character. A quartet by Mozart (in D, No. 5, for piano, violin, viola and violoncello,) was very well executed, though some parts might have been improved; the second movement

gave excellent satisfaction. A quintet by Bishop, "Daughter of Error," was beautifully sung, and received a hearty *encore*. Beethoven's "Sonata Pathétique" was exquisitely rendered, and I am confident would have been considered so by a Boston audience.

These soirées of classical music have been highly appreciated by a small audience, and though they have not been remunerative, we hope Mr. Baldwin will be encouraged to continue his efforts to introduce a high order of music. The fact that such a programme was performed mostly by his own pupils, speaks well of his ability and success as a teacher.

N. M. J.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, MAR. 6, 1858.

CONCERTS.

ORCHESTRAL.—Another capital concert from CARL ZERRAHN! It was the fourth and last of his subscription series, and more nearly filled the Music Hall with listeners on Saturday evening, than either of the three preceding. It opened with that Symphony by which most among our music-lovers were first awakened (many of us twenty years ago) to a sense of the glories of the wondrous world of instrumental music, and which still remains one of the two or three most dear and ever fresh and wonderful of any, notwithstanding that we have heard it scores of times and grown familiar in the mean time with all the other Symphonies of its composer, as well as with the best of Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Schumann, Gade and the rest—the inspired and all-inspiring Symphony in C minor (No. 5) by Beethoven. We have nothing new to say about it, except that its most familiar strains were still found pregnant with new beauties, and that the perfect unity and power and progress of the whole, making each successive movement follow by an inward poetic necessity, till the whole is crowned in glory with the sublime march in the Finale, thus typifying the struggle and the triumph of an earnest life,—are of course more and more apparent with each new hearing under favorable conditions. The orchestra of thirty was too small for the full realization of such grand conceptions, as we all know; but no one blames the concert-giver; he will be too happy to provide as many players as the public calls for by signs unequivocal. But we cannot agree with those who say give us a grand orchestra, with full complement of strings, or let the Symphonies alone until you can. We sincerely wish such criticism may hasten the arrival of the orchestra of sixty; but meanwhile we much prefer to hear the Symphonies revived as frequently as possible, even by a small orchestra, rather than go without them. We do not see the philosophy of lying down to starve to death, because the feast cannot be furnished forth upon so grand a scale as the imagination craves. Besides it is a truth, found in the experience of many, that great tone-poems like the Fifth Symphony, reveal their intentions marvellously well sometimes even when scantily embodied in material sound, and that a small orchestra may at any rate recall very vividly the mind's impression of the essential features of a composition. For in all delights of hearing does not

the mind meet the intention of the music half way? and is not that poor music, devoid of the poetic life and soul of music, which does not quicken the mind's apprehension in thus to meet it? Besides, an earnest lover will make every imperfect representation, every hint or suggestion of a great work of music help him towards a more and more perfect acquaintance with the whole; or, if he already knows it well, if he has had its full meaning flashed upon him in the broad sunshine of a grand performance, then the less perfect rendering serves at least the end of a review; and without occasional reviews these fine spiritual possessions do take wings and fly away.

The Symphony, for such an orchestra, was well performed. We could have wished tones truer and more sympathetic sometimes in the brass, and a more clear and certain utterance of the theme at the first start. Those three notes (of "Fate knocking at the door," as Beethoven said) had not, the first time, quite the right accent, nor were the instruments perfectly together. Schindler says that Beethoven, in explaining the tempo of those first five bars, required that they should be played much more slowly than had been (or still is) usual. We have always felt that there was reason in this. The little theme—or rather *motif*—scarcely arrests the ear at first unless enunciated with a certain deliberate emphasis, and that precision of accent (such that the phrase cannot be taken for a triplet) which is more easily secured in a moderate tempo. Then, when the mind has once fairly seized the theme, and after the hold on the last note and the pause, the *Allegro con brio* can start off at unbridled speed, repeating and re-echoing the little phrase, which is the key to the whole movement, without danger of its importance being under-estimated. This treatment, to be sure, involves one awkwardness when we come to the repeat; but we should like to hear it tried.

While listening to the Scherzo, following its wild movement through that wonderful, mysterious transition out into the full blaze of the triumphal march, we could not but smile to be reminded of a criticism upon that passage which we read in a recent work on Beethoven by Oulibicheff, the Russian biographer of Mozart, who knows Mozart so well and writes of him so glowingly and truly, but who does not know Beethoven, and resolves the mysteries (to him) of all but his earlier works, not even excepting the fifth Symphony, into insanity! He cites this very passage from the Scherzo to the March, this wonderful and most expressive passage, which so excites the mind with expectation of great things to come, as an example to his purpose. He takes the passage out of its connection, out of all poetic relations with the whole thought and progress of the music, and tells us here are forty-four bars of mere un-music, indefinite and aimless sounds; "forty-four measures destitute of aught that can in the remotest degree remind one of any melody, any harmony or any rhythm!" And then he asks us: "Is this music? Yes or no?" What says a Boston audience?—But we must pass to other features of the programme.

The Andante and Minuet from Mozart's E flat Symphony were in charming contrast with other things, and highly relished. For these the orchestra was not too small. Spohr's fresh, ingenious and sparkling overture to *Jessonda* was a pleasant

reminiscence of old "Germania" times; and Weber's "Jubilee" overture made a superb close. Mendelssohn's piano-forte Concerto in D minor is full of beauty and artistic merit, but not so striking and so interesting in its ideas as the more familiar Concerto in G minor. It opens with simple grandeur in the orchestra, but the leading theme of the first movement seems a little tame and sickly; the treatment, however, of the whole is masterly; and the way in which the three last notes of the as it were impromptu cadenza, with which the Allegro ends, are then deliberately adopted for an entering phrase to the Andante, is quite felicitous. The Andante is lovely, and reminds one, where the piano-forte comes in, both in melody, in the accompaniment, and in the key itself, of Beethoven's *Adelaide*—only a passing suggestion, though. The Presto Finale is the most original and witching movement of the whole. The piano part was played with great artistic neatness and facility by Mr. B. J. LANG; his chief want seemed to be that of power of tone; many of the rapid figures we could not distinctly hear; especially of some passages for the left hand we were not sure that we heard them at all; but it was on the whole a graceful, a conscientious and most praise-worthy performance for so young a player, placed for the first time in so formidable a position.

Mr. SCHULTZE's Violin fantasia on some of those piquant Hungarian melodies, was beautifully executed and encoored furiously, but in vain. Mrs. J. H. LONG never appears to more advantage than in that beautiful recitative and romanza from "William Tell;" and this time, although recent illness impaired something of the freshness of her voice, she rendered the broad and noble periods of the melody with true and beautiful expression, while an occasional high tone was sustained with exquisite purity and sweetness. Nor did the rich and suggestive instrumentation suffer. Her second piece, Balfé's song: "Come into the garden, Maud," is too Balfé-ish, too *maud-lin*, in its sweetness to be worthy of Tennyson. And by a strange coincidence the singer's voice and style seemed somehow to have parted with their finer qualities in parting with the finer music. But a ballad is the thing to take the crowd, and cruelly this time, considering the condition of the lady, was the right of the encore enforced.

MRS. LONG'S ANNUAL CONCERT drew out the largest audience that Mercantile Hall could hold, in spite of stormy weather. The occasion but confirmed the popularity of perhaps the most accomplished vocalist who lives among us. The hall is not very good for sound; a certain lack of resonance and deadness could not be quite overcome. The excellent selections by the Mendelssohn Quintette Club, although finely rendered, suffered from this cause: especially the first (which is also the best) movement from Beethoven's Quintet in C, and the most pathetic Adagio and the half ballad-like, half elfin Allegro Scherzando from Mendelssohn's Quintet in B flat. Their *arranged* Quintet, with flute and clarinet taking the melody, from a Scene and Aria in *Robert le Diable*, was more effective and very pleasing of its kind. Mr. LANG with the brothers FRIES renewed the delightful impression of a part of Beethoven's early Trio in C minor, namely the Theme with variations and Scherzo. The same young pianist also proved his skill and tact in the nice matter of accompanying some of the vocal pieces.

Mrs. LONG placed us under obligation by the pro-

duction of so famous a piece, so full of dramatic fire and contrast, as Beethoven's Italian Scene and Aria: *Ah! perfido*, which she delivered with great power and with finished style. She seemed to sing it with a will, as if she had added a real treasure to her repertoire; and we must place it among her happiest efforts. The lovely cantabile: *Per pietà, non dir mi addio* was sung with beautiful expression (and how finely its melody suited the clarinet in the very effective Quintet accompaniment they had arranged for it!), while the impassioned parts before and after gave full scope to her dramatic energy. A certain hardness in some tones must have been owing in great part to the aforesaid deadening influence of the room. With this conspired a strangely talkative and restless disposition of a portion of the audience, who came in late—evidently concert-goers of the class who like the singers and care little for the music.

We do not think the true forte of Mrs. Long lies in the singing of English songs and ballads, though she gave much pleasure by her singing of "Cherry Ripe" by Horn, and of "Napolitaine, I am dreaming of thee," in answer to a recull. She seems more herself in larger music. Verdi's *Non fu sogno* displayed her bravura execution to advantage. In the "Ernani" duet: *Ah! morir*, her voice blended very sweetly with the tenor of Mr. ADAMS, and it was most delicately sung. Mr. Adams, in his cavatina: *L'amor funesto*, sang sweetly as usual, but with less than his usual firmness of tone; we trust the tremolo is not becoming chronic, for such a tenor is a treasure.

MENDELSSOHN QUINTETTE CLUB. The sixth concert was a fine one and consisted of the following selections:

- 1—Quintet in G minor, No. 3. Mozart
- Allegretto—Minuetto—Adagio—Finale, Adagio and Allegro.
- 2—Aria from Don Giovanni, "Dalla sua pace," Mozart
- Mr. Schraubsstaedter.
- 3—Piano Trio, in E flat, No. 1, op. 1.
- Beethoven
- Allegro—Adagio cantabile—Scherzo—Finale, Presto.
- Messrs. Babcock, Meissel and Wulf Fries.
- 4—Fantasie and Variations for Clarinet, on a Theme by
- Danzl, op. 81, J. Spohr
- Thos. Ryan.
- 5—Songs: "Die Rose," from "Zemir and Azor," Spohr
- "Gondolier Song," Lindner
- Mr. Schraubsstaedter.
- 6—Quartet, in E minor, No. 2, op. 44. Mendelssohn
- Allegro appassionato—Scherzo—Andante—Finale, Presto
- agitato.

The strings blended well this time, and did good justice to the admirable compositions which commenced and closed the entertainment. That Quintet in G minor is one of the finest creations of Mozart's genius. What heavenly depth of feeling, what exquisite beauty in that Adagio with muted strings! And what rare invention, which could successfully follow up one long Adagio with another, introductory to the last Allegro! The pianist announced for the evening, Mr. BABCOCK, having sprained his hand, could not appear, and Mr. J. C. D. PARKER kindly volunteered at the last hour to play the Trio, which he did in a most artistic and acceptable manner. He is continually improving. Mr. SCRAUBSTAEDTER sang the beautiful tenor air from "Don Juan," almost never heard upon the stage, with excellent expression, only marred by the hardness of his voice in certain notes. The little German songs were beautiful and very nicely rendered.

ORCHESTRAL UNION. The last two Afternoon Concerts have been very largely attended, and the music gives good satisfaction. The programmes were these:

(Fifth Concert, Feb. 17.)

- 1—Symphony No. 1. Haydn
- 2—Waltz, "Kroll's Ball Klänge." By request, Lumbye
- 3—Overture, "Marrriage of Figaro," Mozart
- 4—Romanze, for Violin, (G minor), Beethoven
- Performed by Mr. Suck.
- 5—The Dream of the Savoyard. Grand Fantasia for the
- Orchestra, with Solos, Lumbye
- 6—Ave Maria, for Flute, Clarinette, Violoncello and Corno
- Anglais, Schubert
- 7—Traviata Quadrille, Zerrahn

(Sixth Concert, March 3.)

- 1—Symphony in D, No. 2, Beethoven
 2—Waltz: "Geistes Schwinger," Lanner
 3—Overture: "Felsenmühle," Reissiger
 4—Adagio and Rondo, for Clarinette, E. M. V. Weber
 Performed by T. Schulz.
 5—Polka: "Papageno." On melodies from the "Magie
 Flute," Stussny
 6—Cavatina from "Nabucco," for Cornet obligato, Verdi
 7—Arenza Quadrille, (Manuscript), Gartner

That Symphony by Haydn is one of his richest works,—especially the Andante, with its ingenious and striking variations; the violin solo in one of them was made admirably effective by the combined forces of Messrs. Suck and Gaertner. The Symphony in D was another added to this winter's revivals of the ever fresh and welcome Symphonies of Beethoven. We had already had this season the first, the third (*Eroica*), the fifth, the seventh, a portion of the eighth, and now we had the second, which is only less beautiful than the miracles of harmony which followed it. It was quite well played. Mr. Suck's playing of Beethoven's rromanza for the violin was an agreeable feature; so was the solo by Mr. SCHULTZE, the rich, warm tone of whose clarinet, so true and so expressive, always charms us in the orchestra whenever it has a bit of solo. His themes from Weber were well-known airs from *Frey-schütz*.

Next week there will be no Concert, as the Music Hall will be occupied by the great Fair for the Provident Association, which we hope all our readers hereabouts will not fail to attend. On Wednesday, March 17th, a new series of the Afternoon Concerts will commence.

From my Diary, No. 25.

FEB. 20.—"Trovator," in Dwight's Journal of to-day, risks, in regard to Verdi, the following opinion:—"Probably there was never before an instance of such astonishing popularity!" He gives a list of twelve operas now performing in various theatres in Italy—the *Trovatore* alone in over a dozen.

Looking into the Harmonicon, Jan. 1826, I find reported thirteen operas of Rossini as being then upon twelve of the Italian stages alone. Upon how many others, is not given. Three theatres in Milan and three in Naples, were performing his operas at the same time.

My impression—which may be a mistaken one—although derived from a somewhat extensive perusal of works bearing upon the point, is, that in proportion to the number of operas which they composed, an equally strong proof of popularity in Italy may be found in regard to the works of Hasse, a century since—of Paer, of Cimarosa, Pacini, Bellini, Mercadante, Donizetti, and, at one time, possibly Meyerbeer.

The fact seems to be, that in the search after novelty, as soon as an opera succeeds upon an Italian stage, it is immediately introduced all over Italy; some two or three, not yet worn out, of the last novelties being kept on hand in case of failure. But the novelties soon disappear, and generally that is the last of them.

MARCH 1.—A friend speaking to me about the Handel and Haydn Society, intimated that it is now rehearsing Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise," in order to "crush out" the performance of that work by other parties. I can state from personal knowledge that last summer the Government of the Society, in arranging the programme for this winter, placed Mozart's *Requiem* and this work upon it, as performances for a single evening. It was imported at the same time with "Israel in Egypt," and was not sooner rehearsed on account of the engagement of Formes, which compelled a departure from the arrangements for the winter.

MUSICAL CHIT-CHAT.

It surely can need no appeal to public gratitude, in either of its two forms of a lively sense of favors past or of favors to come, to induce a general turn-out

this evening at CARL ZERRAHN'S benefit concert. No lover of orchestral music needs to be reminded of the debt he owes this indefatigable conductor. It is enough to know the fact, that his four Concerts have benefited every one except himself; we all feel, of course, that they have benefited *him*, by still confirming his good character as a musician and a man of public spirit: then let us show our feeling this very night, and follow up the moral by a material reward. It will be but a slight return at best, considering all we have received. The programme is attractive. Spohr's descriptive Symphony has not been heard here for a long time. The Festival Overture on the "Rhine-wine Song," by Robert Schumann will be a novelty. He wrote it for the Dusseldorf Festival in 1853. It brings in voices: a male chorus, to be sung by the "ORPHEUS," and tenor song by Mr. KREISSMANN. Mrs. HARWOOD'S fresh voice, too, will lend a feature. For the rest see announcement below.

In consequence of moving our office, this number of the Journal is printed earlier than usual, which obliges us to defer an interesting letter from our New York correspondent....We cannot altogether sympathize with our Brooklyn correspondent's enthusiasm about "Congregational Singing"—at least as he puts it—still less about the merits of the "Plymouth Collection" which seemed to us from a hasty glance to contain rather large doses of something not very far removed from the "Lilla Linden" style of sacred minstrelsy. But of this perhaps hereafter.

Mr. Ullman announces the engagement, for the Spring or Summer delectation of the New Yorkers, of Mons. MUSARD, conductor of the famous Musard Concerts and the Bals Masqués in Paris. At the Academy this week they have performed two operas of Rossini, *Otello*, and *L'Italiana in Algieri*, and *Robert le Diable*....THALBERG and VIEUXTEMPS have been creating a protracted *furor* in New Orleans, repeating there the multifarious programme of all sorts of Concerts, Soirées, Matinées, free concerts for the public schools, &c., &c....The third Annual Concert for the Poor, given in Albany, last month, by that generous and devoted musician, GEORGE W. WARREN, seems to have been a brilliant affair. It was attended two successive evenings by 2,000 persons, and the scene is described as fairy-like, what with the floral decorations and the "100 beautiful children" assembled on the stage. The music seems to have given unbounded satisfaction.

The death of Signor Lablache took place at Naples on the 23d of January. It was generally known that he had been for some time suffering under severe indisposition, and that since his last professional visit to St. Petersburg he has been compelled to desist from the exercise of his public avocations. But the medicinal springs of Germany, and the society of his distinguished friend and compatriot, Rossini, it was said and believed, had in a great degree restored him. Naples in the winter, and Torre del Greco in the spring, were to effect the rest. Signor Lablache was considered so far convalescent, indeed, that his name was advertised in the prospectus of the French Italian Theatre for the actual season; and the aid of his colossal talent was confidently anticipated by the conductors of the Royal Italian Opera, for the opening of the new theatre in Bow street.

The artistic career of Louis Lablache was from the outset one of unchequered success. The son of a French refugee, he was born at Naples on the 6th of December, 1794, and at the age of 12 was placed in the "Conservatorio," to be instructed in the various branches of music. For music in the abstract, however, he did not in his early youth evince any predilection. His passion was the stage; and it is related of him that on several occasions he ran away from the academy, to fulfil engagements in the smaller Neapolitan theatres. Lablache's introduction to London, if we remember correctly, occurred immediately after his return to Paris, in 1834. He was one of the celebrated four (the others being the late Rubini, the retired Tamburini, and the still active, hearty, and universally popular Grisi, who rehearsed her "farewell" to the English public in 1854) for whom Bellini composed, at Paris, his famous opera, *I Puritani*; and subsequently the comic opera of *Don Pasquale* was written for him, in the same capital, by his compatriot Donizetti.

Perhaps not one of the Italian artists—the imperishable Grisi herself not excepted—who have reaped honor and fortune in this country, ever became a more fixed and prominent idea in the public mind than Lablache. His geniality was infectious—none could resist it; and to such a point of familiarity had he arrived with his audience that, if anything was going ill, Lablache would seem to be admitted into their confidence, just as though he had been one of themselves, and—grand artist as all Europe acknowledged him—conscious, like themselves, that whatever was wrong could not be on account of, but in spite of, him. Although lately Signor Lablache suffered intense anguish from the effects of his malady—which we believe was dropsy—not only were there no fears of his immediate decease, but, on the contrary, hopes were entertained of his speedy recovery, and schemes had been projected for removing him to Naples to some place more favorable to his convalescence. The blow, however, has been struck unexpectedly; the world has been deprived of an artist of the highest gifts; and the large circle of relatives and friends who are left to deplore his loss must rest satisfied with the consolation that his memory will be cherished as that of one who alike reflected honor on public and private life.—*London Times*.

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PROGRAMME.

PART I.

- 1—The consecration of Tones, Dr. L. Spohr
 Characteristic Symphony, from a Poem by Carl Pfeiffer.
 2—Aria: "Ah mon fils," from the "Prophet," Meyerbeer
 Mrs. Harwood.
 3—Andante and Variations for the Flute, on Themes from
 "Sonambula," Carl Zerrahn.

PART II.

- 4—Festival Overture on the "Rhine-Wine-Song," (first time,) R. Schumann
 For Orchestra, with Solos and Chorus, sung by the Orpheus
 Glee Club.
 5—Aria: "Qui la voce," from "I Puritani," Bellini
 Mrs. Harwood.
 6—Serenade, (Orpheus Glee Club,) Marschner
 7—Fantasia for the Flute, on Themes from "La Fille du
 Regiment," Bricealdi
 Carl Zerrahn.
 8—Overture: "Oberon," Weber

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